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UNCLAS MANAMA 001691

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP, NEA/PPD, PA/PR/FPC

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: BAHRAINI JOURNALIST DESCRIBES FOREIGN PRESS CENTER PROGRAM AS "HORIZON BROADENING"

REF: STATE 60805

**¶1.** Abbas Busafwan, Manama's participant in the Foreign Press Center's reporting tour about Arab American and other ethnic communities (May 16-29, 2004), told the APAO that the program had deepened his understanding about America and broadened his horizons. The reporting tour was his first visit to the U.S. Busafwan is the head of the local news desk and a columnist at "Al Wasat" Arabic newspaper where he covers Bahrain's democratization and reform efforts. He said that meeting with a widely diverse group of American communities was especially helpful, mentioning the meetings with Muslim Americans in Michigan, Cuban Americans, and Coptic Orthodox Christians. Busafwan said that the highlight of the tour was a discussion about political lobbies with University of Michigan faculty, "The meeting at the U. of Michigan gave us a complete picture of how the different communities and interest groups work within the American system to achieve their goals."

**¶2.** Busafwan believes that Arab journalists would be interested in FPC programs on how the U.S. press covers the three branches of government, the press and the judicial system, academic freedom, and the role of ethics in the media.

**¶3.** (Comment: Bahrain is a small, yet very diverse country, and one of post's goals in nominating Busafwan was to expose him to how diverse communities can work together productively in a thriving democracy. Kudos to FPC, which more than met post's goals with this reporting tour program. End comment.)

Monroe